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Applicants : Floyd A. Searer et al.  
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IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 1, 2, 16, and 17 and amend Claims 3-10, 12-14, 18-24, and 26 as follows:

1-2. (cancelled)

3. (currently amended) ~~[[The]]~~ A shelf comprising: according to Claim 2,  
a plate member, said plate member having a plurality of openings;  
a band; and  
a plurality of posts mounted to said plate member, each of said posts including a  
slot, a proximal end, and a distal end, said proximal ends of said posts positioned in said  
openings, said slots extending into said distal ends and receiving and supporting said band to  
form a fence around at least a portion of said plate member, wherein said posts include caps, and  
said caps mounted on said distal ends over said slots to thereby retain said band in said slots of  
said posts.

4. (currently amended) The shelf according to Claim 3 [[1]], wherein said posts comprise cylindrical pins.

5. (currently amended) The shelf according to Claim 3 [[2]], wherein said openings comprise through-holes extending through said plate member.

6. (currently amended) The shelf according to Claim 3 [[1]], wherein said plate member comprises a circular plate.

7. (currently amended) The shelf according to Claim 3 [[1]], wherein said plate member comprises a generally pie-shaped plate.

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8. (currently amended) The shelf according to Claim 3 [[1]], wherein said plate member comprises a wood plate.

9. (currently amended) The shelf according to Claim 3 [[1]], wherein said band comprises a metal band.

10. (currently amended) The shelf according to Claim 3 [[1]], wherein said posts comprise metal posts.

11. (original) The shelf according to Claim 10, wherein said metal posts comprise aluminum posts.

12. (currently amended) The shelf according to Claim 3 [[1]], wherein said plate member includes a through-hole extending there through for receiving a center post.

13. (currently amended) The shelf according to Claim 3 [[2]], wherein said plate member includes a perimeter portion, said plurality of openings spaced along said perimeter portion wherein said band forms a perimeter fence.

14. (currently amended) The shelf according to Claim 3 [[2]], wherein each of said posts includes a base portion and a projecting portion, each of said base portions positioned in a respective opening and having a smaller diameter than their respective projecting portion.

15. (original) The shelf according to Claim 14, wherein each of said projecting portion rests on said plate member around a respective opening of said plate member.

16-17. (cancelled)

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18. (currently amended) ~~[[The]]~~ A shelf assembly comprising: according to Claim 17,  
a center post; and  
at least one shelf mounted to said center post, said shelf comprising:  
a plate member, said plate member including a plurality of openings;  
a band; and  
a plurality of posts mounted to said plate member, each of said posts  
including a slot, a proximal end, and a distal end, said posts mounted to said plate at said  
proximal ends, said slots extending into said distal ends and receiving and supporting said band  
to form a fence around at least a portion of said plate member, and wherein said fence posts  
include caps, and said caps mounted on said distal ends over said slots to thereby retain said band  
in said slots of said fence posts.

19. (currently amended) The shelf assembly according to Claim 18, wherein said ~~fence~~ posts comprise cylindrical pins.

20. (currently amended) The shelf according to Claim 18 ~~[[16]]~~ wherein said plate member comprises a circular plate.

21. (currently amended) The shelf assembly according to Claim 18 ~~[[16]]~~, wherein said plate member comprises a wood plate.

22. (currently amended) The shelf assembly according to Claim 18 ~~[[16]]~~, wherein said band comprises a metal band.

23. (currently amended) The shelf assembly according to Claim 22, wherein said ~~fence~~ posts comprise metal posts.

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24. (currently amended) The shelf assembly according to Claim 18 [[16]], wherein said plate member includes a through-hole extending therethrough, said center post extending through said through hole.

25. (original) The shelf assembly according to Claim 24, wherein said through hole comprises a center through-hole located generally at a center of said plate member.

26. (currently amended) The shelf assembly according to Claim 18 [[16]], wherein said band comprises a plurality of band segments.

27-31. (cancelled)